



Virginia  
Regulatory  
Town Hall

## Final Regulation Agency Background Document

<b>Agency Name:</b>	Board of Medicine, Department of Health Professions
<b>VAC Chapter Number:</b>	18 VAC 85-110-10 et seq.
<b>Regulation Title:</b>	Regulations Governing the Practice of Athletic Trainers
<b>Action Title:</b>	Requirements for certification
<b>Date:</b>	4/6/01

Please refer to the Administrative Process Act (§ 9-6.14:9.1 *et seq.* of the *Code of Virginia*), Executive Order Twenty-Five (98), Executive Order Fifty-Eight (99) , and the *Virginia Register Form, Style and Procedure Manual* for more information and other materials required to be submitted in the final regulatory action package.

### Summary

*Please provide a brief summary of the new regulation, amendments to an existing regulation, or the regulation being repealed. There is no need to state each provision or amendment; instead give a summary of the regulatory action. If applicable, generally describe the existing regulation. Do not restate the regulation or the purpose and intent of the regulation in the summary. Rather, alert the reader to all substantive matters or changes contained in the proposed new regulation, amendments to an existing regulation, or the regulation being repealed. Please briefly and generally summarize any substantive changes made since the proposed action was published.*

As mandated by Chapters 639, 682, and 747 of the 1999 General Assembly, the Board of Medicine has adopted regulations for the certification of athletic trainers. Criteria for board certification include educational and examination requirements and submission of an application and fee. Regulations also provide criteria for biennial renewal of certification including a renewal fee and current certification by the national certifying body in athletic training. Standards of practice are set for individual practice and responsibility for supervision of persons holding provisional certification and for student athletic trainers. Fees, as necessary to support the regulatory and disciplinary activities of the board, are established in regulation.

### Changes Made Since the Proposed Stage

*Please detail any changes, other than strictly editorial changes, made to the text of the proposed regulation since its publication. Please provide citations of the sections of the proposed regulation that have been altered since the proposed stage and a statement of the purpose of each change.*

No changes to proposed regulations have been made in the adoption of final amendments.

### Statement of Final Agency Action

*Please provide a statement of the final action taken by the agency: including the date the action was taken, the name of the agency taking the action, and the title of the regulation.*

On April 6, 2001, the Board of Medicine adopted final regulations, 18 VAC 85-120-10 et seq., Regulations Governing the Practice of Athletic Trainers, in order to implement a statutory mandate for certification of the profession.

### Basis

*Please identify the state and/or federal source of legal authority to promulgate the regulation. The discussion of this statutory authority should: 1) describe its scope and the extent to which it is mandatory or discretionary; and 2) include a brief statement relating the content of the statutory authority to the specific regulation. In addition, where applicable, please describe the extent to which proposed changes exceed federal minimum requirements. Full citations of legal authority and, if available, web site addresses for locating the text of the cited authority, shall be provided. If the final text differs from that of the proposed, please state that the Office of the Attorney General has certified that the agency has the statutory authority to promulgate the final regulation and that it comports with applicable state and/or federal law*

**Chapter 24** establishes the general powers and duties of health regulatory boards including the responsibility to promulgate regulations, levy fees, administer a licensure and renewal program, and discipline regulated professionals.

*§ 54.1-2400. General powers and duties of health regulatory boards.--The general powers and duties of health regulatory boards shall be:*

- 1. To establish the qualifications for registration, certification or licensure in accordance with the applicable law which are necessary to ensure competence and integrity to engage in the regulated professions.*
- 2. To examine or cause to be examined applicants for certification or licensure. Unless otherwise required by law, examinations shall be administered in writing or shall be a demonstration of manual skills.*

3. *To register, certify or license qualified applicants as practitioners of the particular profession or professions regulated by such board.*
4. *To establish schedules for renewals of registration, certification and licensure.*
5. *To levy and collect fees for application processing, examination, registration, certification or licensure and renewal that are sufficient to cover all expenses for the administration and operation of the Department of Health Professions, the Board of Health Professions and the health regulatory boards.*
6. *To promulgate regulations in accordance with the Administrative Process Act (§ 9-6.14:1 et seq.) which are reasonable and necessary to administer effectively the regulatory system. Such regulations shall not conflict with the purposes and intent of this chapter or of Chapter 1 and Chapter 25 of this title.*
7. *To revoke, suspend, restrict, or refuse to issue or renew a registration, certificate or license which such board has authority to issue for causes enumerated in applicable law and regulations.*
8. *To appoint designees from their membership or immediate staff to coordinate with the Intervention Program Committee and to implement, as is necessary, the provisions of Chapter 25.1 (§ 54.1-2515 et seq.) of this title. Each health regulatory board shall appoint one such designee.*
9. *To take appropriate disciplinary action for violations of applicable law and regulations.*
10. *To appoint a special conference committee, composed of not less than two members of a health regulatory board, to act in accordance with § 9-6.14:11 upon receipt of information that a practitioner of the appropriate board may be subject to disciplinary action. The special conference committee may (i) exonerate the practitioner; (ii) reinstate the practitioner; (iii) place the practitioner on probation with such terms as it may deem appropriate; (iv) reprimand the practitioner; (v) modify a previous order; and (vi) impose a monetary penalty pursuant to § 54.1-2401. The order of the special conference committee shall become final thirty days after service of the order unless a written request to the board for a hearing is received within such time. If service of the decision to a party is accomplished by mail, three days shall be added to the thirty-day period. Upon receiving a timely written request for a hearing, the board or a panel of the board shall then proceed with a hearing as provided in § 9-6.14:12, and the action of the committee shall be vacated. This subdivision shall not be construed to affect the authority or procedures of the Boards of Medicine and Nursing pursuant to §§ 54.1-2919 and 54.1-3010.*
11. *To convene, at their discretion, a panel consisting of at least five board members or, if a quorum of the board is less than five members, consisting of a quorum of the members to conduct formal proceedings pursuant to § 9-6.14:12, decide the case, and issue a final agency case decision. Any decision rendered by majority vote of such panel shall have the same effect as if made by the full board and shall be subject to court review in accordance with the Administrative Process Act. No member who participates in an informal proceeding conducted in accordance with § 9-6.14:11 shall serve on a panel conducting formal proceedings pursuant to § 9-6.14:12 to consider the same matter.*

12. *To issue inactive licenses and certificates and promulgate regulations to carry out such purpose. Such regulations shall include, but not be limited to, the qualifications, renewal fees, and conditions for reactivation of such licenses or certificates.*

**Certification of athletic trainers and the promulgation of regulations for that purpose are mandated by Chapters 639, 682, and 747 of the 1999 General Assembly.** Amendments to **Chapter 29 of Title 54.1** establish a definition of the practice of athletic training, set certain requirements for certification of the profession and authorize the Board to establish "appropriate training and educational credentials for the practice of athletic training".

**§ 54.1-2900. Definitions.**

*As used in this chapter, unless the context requires a different meaning:*

*"Acupuncturist" means individuals approved by the Board to practice acupuncture. This is limited to "licensed acupuncturist" which means an individual other than a doctor of medicine, osteopathy or podiatry who has successfully completed the requirements for licensure established by the Board (approved titles are limited to: Licensed Acupuncturist, Lic.Ac., and L.Ac.) and "physician acupuncturist" which means doctors of medicine, osteopathy, chiropractic and podiatry who have fulfilled the physician requirements for licensure to practice acupuncture established by the Board.*

*"Auricular acupuncture" means the subcutaneous insertion of sterile, disposable acupuncture needles in predetermined, bilateral locations in the outer ear when used exclusively and specifically in the context of an approved chemical dependency treatment program, under the appropriate supervision of a licensed physician acupuncturist or licensed acupuncturist.*

*"Board" means the Board of Medicine.*

*"Healing arts" means the arts and sciences dealing with the prevention, diagnosis, treatment and cure or alleviation of human physical or mental ailments, conditions, diseases, pain or infirmities.*

*"Physician assistant" means an individual who has met the requirements of the Board for licensure and who works under the supervision of a licensed doctor of medicine, osteopathy, or podiatry.*

*"Practice of acupuncture" means the stimulation of certain points on or near the surface of the body by the insertion of needles to prevent or modify the perception of pain or to normalize physiological functions, including pain control, for the treatment of certain ailments or conditions of the body and includes the techniques of electroacupuncture, cupping and moxibustion. The practice of acupuncture does not include the use of physical therapy, chiropractic, or osteopathic manipulative techniques; the use or prescribing of any drugs, medications, serums or vaccines; or the procedure of auricular acupuncture as exempted in § 54.1-2901 when used specifically and exclusively in the context of a publicly supported comprehensive drug treatment program by an employee of the program who is trained and approved by the National Acupuncture Detoxification Association.*

***"Practice of athletic training" means the prevention, recognition, evaluation, and treatment of injuries or conditions related to athletic or recreational activity that requires physical skill and utilizes strength, power, endurance, speed, flexibility, range of motion or agility or a substantially similar injury or condition resulting from occupational activity immediately upon the onset of such injury or condition; and subsequent treatment and rehabilitation of such injuries or conditions under the direction of a licensed physical therapist and the patient's physician or under the direction of any doctor of medicine, osteopathy, chiropractic, podiatry, or dentistry, while using heat, light, sound, cold, electricity, exercise or mechanical or other devices.***

*"Practice of chiropractic" means the adjustment of the twenty-four movable vertebrae of the spinal column, and assisting nature for the purpose of normalizing the transmission of nerve energy, but does not include the use of surgery, obstetrics, osteopathy or the administration or prescribing of any drugs, medicines, serums or vaccines.*

*"Practice of medicine or osteopathic medicine" means the prevention, diagnosis and treatment of human physical or mental ailments, conditions, diseases, pain or infirmities by any means or method.*

*"Practice of occupational therapy" means the evaluation, analysis, assessment, and delivery of education and training in activities of daily living (ADL); the design, fabrication, and application of orthoses (splints); guidance in the selection and use of adaptive equipment; therapeutic activities to enhance functional performance; prevocational evaluation and training; and consultation concerning the adaptation of physical environments for individuals who have disabilities.*

*"Practice of physical therapy" means, upon medical referral and direction, the evaluation, testing, treatment, reeducation and rehabilitation by physical, mechanical or electronic measures and procedures of individuals who, because of trauma, disease or birth defect, present physical and emotional disorders, but does not include the use of Roentgen rays and radium for diagnostic or therapeutic purposes or the use of electricity for shock therapy and surgical purposes including cauterization.*

*"Practice of podiatry" means the medical, mechanical and surgical treatment of the ailments of the human foot and ankle, but does not include amputation proximal to the metatarsal-phalangeal joints. The Board of Medicine shall determine whether a specific type of treatment of the foot and ankle is within the scope of practice of podiatry.*

*"Practice of radiologic technology" means the application of x-rays to human beings for diagnostic or therapeutic purposes.*

*"Practice of respiratory care" means the (i) administration of pharmacological, diagnostic, and therapeutic agents related to respiratory care procedures necessary to implement a treatment, disease prevention, pulmonary rehabilitative, or diagnostic regimen prescribed by a practitioner of medicine or osteopathic medicine; (ii) transcription and implementation of the written or verbal orders of a practitioner of medicine or osteopathic medicine pertaining to the practice of respiratory care; (iii) observation and monitoring of signs and symptoms, general behavior, general physical response to respiratory care treatment and diagnostic testing, including determination of whether such signs, symptoms, reactions, behavior or general physical response exhibit abnormal characteristics; and (iv) implementation of respiratory care procedures, based on observed abnormalities, or appropriate reporting, referral, respiratory care protocols or changes in treatment pursuant to the written or verbal orders by a licensed practitioner of medicine or osteopathic medicine or the initiation of emergency procedures, pursuant to the Board's regulations or as otherwise authorized by law. The practice of respiratory care may be performed in any clinic, hospital, skilled nursing facility, private dwelling or other place deemed appropriate by the Board in accordance with the written or verbal order of a practitioner of medicine or osteopathic medicine, and shall be performed under qualified medical direction.*

*"Qualified medical direction" means, in the context of the practice of respiratory care, having readily accessible to the respiratory care practitioner a licensed practitioner of medicine or osteopathic medicine who has specialty training or experience in the management of acute and chronic respiratory disorders and who is responsible for the quality, safety, and appropriateness of the respiratory services provided by the respiratory care practitioner.*

*"Radiologic technologist" means an individual, other than a licensed doctor of medicine, osteopathy, podiatry, or chiropractic, or a dentist licensed pursuant to Chapter 27 (§ 54.1-2700 et seq.) of this title, who (i) performs, may be called upon to perform, or who is licensed to perform a comprehensive scope of diagnostic radiologic procedures employing equipment which emits ionizing radiation and (ii) is delegated or exercises responsibility for the operation of radiation-generating equipment, the shielding of patient and staff from unnecessary radiation, the appropriate exposure of radiographs or other procedures which contribute to any significant extent to the site or dosage of ionizing radiation to which a patient is exposed.*

*"Radiologic technologist, limited" means an individual, other than a licensed radiologic technologist, dental hygienist or person who is otherwise authorized by the Board of Dentistry under Chapter 27 of this*

*title and the regulations pursuant thereto, who performs diagnostic radiographic procedures employing equipment which emits ionizing radiation which is limited to specific areas of the human body.*

*"Respiratory care" means the practice of the allied health profession responsible for the direct and indirect services, including inhalation therapy and respiratory therapy, in the treatment, management, diagnostic testing, control and care of patients with deficiencies and abnormalities associated with the cardiopulmonary system under qualified medical direction.*

**§ 54.1-2957.4. Certification as athletic trainer required; requisite training and educational requirements; powers of the Board concerning athletic training.**

*A. It shall be unlawful for any person to practice or to hold himself out as practicing as an athletic trainer unless he holds a certificate as an athletic trainer ninety days after the effective date of regulations promulgated by the Board implementing athletic trainer certification. The Board shall issue certificates to practice athletic training to applicants for such certification who meet the requirements of this chapter and the Board's regulations.*

*B. The Board shall establish criteria for the certification of athletic trainers to ensure the appropriate training and educational credentials for the practice of athletic training. Such criteria may include experiential requirements and shall include one of the following: (i) a Virginia testing program to determine the quality of the training and educational credentials for and competence of athletic trainers, (ii) successful completion of a training program and passage of the certifying examination administered by the National Athletic Training Association Board of Certification resulting in certification as an athletic trainer by such national association, or (iii) completion of another Board-approved training program and certifying examination.*

*C. At its discretion, the Board may grant provisional certification to persons who have successfully completed an approved training program or who have met requisite experience criteria established by the Board. Such provisional certification shall expire as provided for in the regulations of the Board.*

*D. The Board shall promulgate such regulations as may be necessary for the certification of athletic trainers and the issuance of certificates to athletic trainers to practice in the Commonwealth. The Board's regulations shall assure the competence and integrity of any person claiming to be an athletic trainer or who engages in the practice of athletic training.*

**§ 54.1-2957.5. Advisory Board on Athletic Training established; duties; composition; appointment; terms.**

*A. The Advisory Board on Athletic Training shall assist the Board in formulating its requirements for the certification of athletic trainers. In the exercise of this responsibility, the Advisory Board shall recommend to the Board the criteria for certification of athletic trainers and the standards of professional conduct for certificate holders. The Advisory Board shall also assist in such other matters relating to the practice of athletic training as the Board may require.*

*B. The Advisory Board shall consist of five members appointed by the Governor for four-year terms. The first appointments shall provide for staggered terms with two members being appointed for a two-year term, two members being appointed for a three-year term and one member being appointed for a four-year term. Three members shall be at the time of appointment athletic trainers who have practiced for not less than three years, including one athletic trainer practicing at a secondary school, one practicing at an institution of higher education, and one practicing in a nonacademic environment. One member shall be a physician licensed to practice medicine in the Commonwealth and one member shall be a citizen appointed by the Governor from the Commonwealth at large.*

*Vacancies occurring other than by expiration of term shall be filled for the unexpired term. No person shall be eligible to serve on the Advisory Board for more than two full consecutive terms.*

**§ 54.1-2957.6. Exceptions to athletic trainer certification.**

A. The requirements for certification of athletic trainers shall not prohibit the recognition, evaluation, and treatment of injuries or conditions related to physical activity immediately upon the onset of such injury or condition, or the prevention of injuries or conditions, by any coach, physical education instructor or person conducting exercise or conditioning programs or classes within the scope of their duties as employees or volunteers; nor shall the requirements for certification of athletic trainers prevent student athletic trainers from practicing athletic training under the supervision and control of a certified athletic trainer or a person who is otherwise exempt from the athletic certification requirements.

B. Notwithstanding the provisions of §§ 54.1-2957.4 and 54.1-2957.5, any person who, prior to June 30, 1999, is employed in Virginia as an athletic trainer, or in the performance of his employment duties engages in the practice of athletic training, shall not be required to obtain a certificate from the Board to continue to be so employed until July 1, 2002.

Further, § 54.1-2912.1 requires the Board to prescribe requirements to ensure continued competency for practitioners it regulates.

**§ 54.1-2912.1. Continued competency requirements.**

A. The Board shall prescribe by regulation such requirements as may be necessary to ensure continued practitioner competence which may include continuing education, testing, and/or any other requirement.

B. In promulgating such regulations, the Board shall consider (i) the need to promote ethical practice, (ii) an appropriate standard of care, (iii) patient safety, (iv) application of new medical technology, (v) appropriate communication with patients, and (vi) knowledge of the changing health care system.

C. The Board may approve persons who provide or accredit such programs in order to accomplish the purposes of this section.

The Assistant Attorney General who provides counsel to the Board of Medicine has provided a letter of assurance that the amended regulations are consistent with statutory law.

## Purpose

*Please provide a statement explaining the need for the new or amended regulation. This statement must include the rationale or justification of the final regulatory action and detail the specific reasons it is essential to protect the health, safety or welfare of citizens. A statement of a general nature is not acceptable, particular rationales must be explicitly discussed. Please include a discussion of the goals of the proposal and the problems the proposal is intended to solve.*

SJR 122, a study resolution passed by the 1998 General Assembly, was prompted by a concern that the role of the athletic trainer has become increasingly significant to the safety and well-being of an expanding number of physically active individuals, especially minors participating in organized athletics. Although private credentialing existed, such certification was not mandatory, and athletic trainers who were not nationally certified may have no particular education or training qualifications. It was felt that this lack of regulation may pose a threat to the public in that athletic trainers are often the first responders to injuries at sporting and training events and must often make immediate, independent, and even life-threatening judgments as to the severity of those injuries.

The empirical evidence examined by the Board included disciplinary data from other states that regulate athletic trainers, criticality rating results, malpractice insurance information, and actuarial prediction data sources. From several analyses of the criticality ratings, several consistent findings resulted. A panel of experts judged the likelihood of various types of injuries resulting from the practice of athletic training practice to be significantly higher for the “incompetent”(i.e., uncertified) vs. “competent” (i.e., nationally certified) athletic trainer. Children and adolescents posed a particular concern for the Board because of their vulnerability due to their minor status. The growing involvement of children in organized sports and fitness activities has been accompanied by not only increased numbers but by new types of injuries, particularly musculoskeletal in training situations.

Following recommendations of the study report in Senate Document No. 10 (1999), legislation was introduced and passed in the 1999 General Assembly to mandate certification of athletic trainers and the promulgation of regulations for that purpose (Chapters 639, 682, and 747). No person employed as an athletic trainer prior to June 30, 1999 is required to obtain certification to continue to be employed until July 1, 2002. The Board of Medicine must have its regulations for certification in effect in advance of that date in order to give athletic trainers sufficient time to file applications and become certified by that date.

## Substance

*Please identify and explain the new substantive provisions, the substantive changes to existing sections, or both where appropriate. Please note that a more detailed discussion is required under the statement of the regulatory action's detail.*

All sections of these regulations are new. Provisions set out definitions for the practice and compliance with regulations, general requirements for certification, and fees that are necessary for administration of the regulatory program. Provisions also establish the educational requirements, which include graduation from an accredited program or completion of an internship that qualifies a person to be credentialed as a Certified Athletic Trainer from the national certifying body. Applicants for certification must submit evidence of passage of the national entry level examination for athletic trainers. Provisions allow a graduate of an educational program to be granted provisional certification while waiting the results of the certifying examination.

Requirements for a biennial renewal are listed to include payment of a renewal fee and attestation of current certification by NATABOC, the national credentialing body in athletic training. Requirements for reinstatement of a certificate that has been lapsed for more than two years or has been revoked by the board are established.

The regulations set the responsibilities of an individual athletic trainer for his patient and the general responsibilities of a trainer, including responsibility for the actions of persons under his supervision and direction to include assurance that they do not perform functions that require professional judgment or discretion in the practice of athletic training. Under supervisory

responsibilities, the responsibilities and requirements for an athletic trainer in the supervision of a person with provisional certification or a student athletic trainer are established.

Finally, regulations provide that violations of Chapter 29 of Title 54.1 of the Code of Virginia may subject a certificate holder to sanctions as determined by the board.

## Issues

*Please provide a statement identifying the issues associated with the final regulatory action. The term "issues" means: 1) the advantages and disadvantages to the public of implementing the new provisions; 2) the advantages and disadvantages to the agency or the Commonwealth; and 3) other pertinent matters of interest to the regulated community, government officials, and the public. If there are no disadvantages to the public or the Commonwealth, please include a sentence to that effect.*

Amendments to Chapter 29 of Title 54.1 establish a definition of the practice of athletic training, set certain requirements for certification of the profession and authorize the Board to establish "appropriate training and educational credentials for the practice of athletic training". The Board was guided by the Advisory Board on Athletic Training which is representative of the various practice settings for the profession and of the diversity in geography and available educational and experiential resources in the state.

Some of the issues addressed during the development of regulations included:

1) Which examination or examinations should be required as specified in § 54.1-2957.4?

While the Code of Virginia mandates that criteria for certification shall include an examination, it does provide several options from which the Board may choose. The option most likely to provide a nationally and professionally-recognized minimal standard is passage of the certifying examination administered by the National Athletic Training Association Board of Certification (NATABOC) resulting in certification as an athletic trainer by the professional credentialing association for athletic trainers, the National Athletic Trainers Association (NATA). Of the estimated 900 athletic trainers in Virginia, over 500 are already NATA-certified.

The examination is comprised of five practice areas (i.e., content domains) resulting from the latest role delineation study conducted in 1995. The content domains are as follows: (1) prevention of athletic injuries, (2) recognition, evaluation and immediate care of athletic injuries, (3) rehabilitation and reconditioning of athletic injuries, (4) health care administration, and (5) education and counseling. Each of these content domains is broken down further into constituent tasks.

The NATABOC certification examination is administered five times a year in various locations in the state, including Richmond and Falls Church. The Advisory Board considered the issue of an examination as mandated by the Code and as necessary to ensure a standard of minimal competency to practice.

2) What training and educational credentials should be required for certification?

Prior to being allowed to sit for the NATABOC examination, national certification standards require that a candidate be a graduate of NATA-approved entry-level program of study in athletic training education accredited by the Commission on Accreditation of Allied Health Education Programs (CAAHEP). Graduates must complete their program within two years, have a baccalaureate degree from a college or university, and complete at least 800 hours of supervised athletic training experience.

Those who have not completed an accredited program must complete an internship of 1500 hours of supervised experience with at least 1000 hours in a traditional athletic training setting at the interscholastic, intercollegiate or professional sports level. The additional 500 hours may be attained in an allied clinical setting and/or sports camp under the supervision of a certified trainer. The intern must also complete certain specific didactic educational requirements with one course in each of the following areas: Health, Human Anatomy, Kinesiology/Biomechanics; Human Physiology; Physiology of Exercise; Basic Athletic Training and Advanced Athletic Training.

Accredited programs exist at Old Dominion University, University of Virginia, and James Madison University. In addition, there are currently unaccredited undergraduate programs at Virginia Commonwealth University, Shenandoah University, Norfolk State University, Liberty University, Hampton University, Longwood College, and several others.

The NATA has already announced that after January 1, 2004, it will not accept internship credentials in lieu of graduating from an accredited educational program. In anticipation of the NATA phase-out of the internship as a route to national certification, Virginia Commonwealth University and the College of William and Mary have begun the process of applying for program accreditation. Others schools with undergraduate programs are expected to also become accredited.

The Advisory Board considered the availability and distribution of accredited courses throughout the state in its recommendation of educational requirements for certification by the Board of Medicine.

3) How can regulations be promulgated that will adequately protect the public and meet the statutory mandate without unduly limiting access to care in some areas of the state?

Knowing that many persons currently working as athletic trainers would need some time to meet the criteria for certification, the legislation specified that no person employed as a trainer prior to June 30, 1999 would have to obtain certification from the Board prior to July 1, 2002 in order to continue to be employed. In addition, the Code specifies that persons who practice as athletic trainers have ninety days after the effective date of the regulations in which to fulfill the certification requirements. Therefore, athletic trainers in the Commonwealth have at least three years in which to become NATA-certified or to gain the credentials necessary to meet the requirements of the Board.

As a means of making specific course offerings available to persons who will seek to become credentialed prior to 2004 (the date on which the educational requirements for NATA-

certification will change), the Advisory Board may work with other agencies of the state and with the secondary principals' association to encourage distance learning opportunities. Since the Virginia High School League supported the legislation mandating certification, it is likely that that group would also be supportive of efforts to get persons certified who are currently providing athletic training services in the public schools.

4) What should the Board require to ensure the continuing competency of athletic trainers?

In compliance with § 54.1-2912.1, the Board of Medicine must provide some measure of continuing competency for all professionals under its regulatory authority. The issue was to determine the nature and type of continuing learning activities or courses that are necessary to minimally assure the Board that a practitioner is being exposed to new technologies and improved practices in the profession. The Advisory Board recommended and the Board adopted the standard for evidence of continued competency to be current certification by NATABOC. That body requires 80 hours of continuing education, including recertification in CPR, every three years, adherence to the NATABOC Standards of Professional Practice, maintenance of a continuing education folder, and submission of an annual CEU maintenance fee of \$40 or payment of NATA annual dues of \$185.

5) What fees should the Board require in order to fund the regulatory and disciplinary program for athletic trainers?

The Department of Health Professions has developed "Principles for Fee Development" to which all boards should adhere in the consideration of a fee structure for any set of regulations. Within those principles, the Board of Medicine has delineated a three-tiered structure for the various professions it regulates. The first tier consists of medical doctors, chiropractors, podiatrists, and osteopaths, who have a high degree of independent practice and relatively high number of disciplinary cases. The second tier consists of physical therapists, occupational therapists, radiologic technologists, physician assistants, licensed acupuncturists, and respiratory care practitioners who practice independently but usually work within organizations and have a relatively low level of disciplinary cases. The third level consists of radiologic technologists-limited and physical therapist assistants, who do practice only under supervision and who also have a low level of disciplinary cases.

In the promulgation of regulations, the Board determined that fees for athletic trainers should be equated with the fees set for professions in the second tier of regulated entities.

6) What should be the parameters and requirements for supervision by an athletic trainers of persons who work under their direction?

In determining the appropriate level of supervision, the Advisory Board had to balance reality and availability of services with competency and public safety. Obviously, the range of ability and experience of uncertified persons working with a certified athletic trainer is immense - from the adult who has completed all course work and internship hours to qualify for certification and is just awaiting the results of an examination to the freshman in high school who is volunteering to be a student athletic trainer for the football team. Likewise, the variety in settings and acuity

of patients requires some flexibility in the extent to which the athletic trainer must provide "hands-on" oversight of the services.

To accommodate the variety of personnel, responsibilities and work settings, the Board proposed somewhat different regulations for the supervision of persons with provisional certification and those who are student athletic trainers. Supervision of a provisional certificate holder may be by written protocol with provisions for periodic review and evaluation and with guidelines for availability and ongoing communication proportionate to factors such as practice setting and experience. Supervision of a student athletic trainer must be more direct and on-going and requires the certified trainer to plan, direct and evaluate each activity and delegate only those tasks consistent with the level of competency and experience of the student.

In both cases, the certified athletic trainer remains responsible for the actions of persons engaging in the practice of athletic training under supervision and direction and must ensure that non-certified persons are performing functions that do not require professional judgment or discretion. (Section 120)

#### **Advantages or disadvantages to the public:**

Certification of athletic trainers by the Board will provide the public with greater assurance that persons who provide treatment and prevention services to athletes are qualified and accountable for their actions. The education and examination requirements are nationally recognized as the minimal standard for public safety. The practice of certain aspects of athletic training by persons who have provisional licensure or who are student trainers has been permitted under specific requirements for supervision and direction. Exceptions in the law for provision of first aid by coaches, teachers and others will ensure that emergency services are not unduly restricted. There are no disadvantages to the public.

#### **Advantages or disadvantages to the agency or the Commonwealth:**

There are no specific advantages or disadvantages to the agency or the Commonwealth. Costs for the regulation and discipline of athletic trainers and for the Advisory Board will be borne by the certified trainers through their fees, so there should be no positive or negative impact on the budget of the Board or the Department.

### **Public Comment**

*Please summarize all public comment received during the public comment period and provide the agency response. If no public comment was received, please include a statement indicating that fact.*

Proposed regulations were published in the Virginia Register of Regulations on January 2, 2001. Public comment was requested for a 60-day period ending March 3, 2001; during that period no written comments were received from individuals and organizations. A Public Hearing before the Board was held on January 26, 2001, at which time the following comments were made:

Two persons expressed concern that licensure of athletic trainers would be in the best interest of the public and that it was difficult to regulate or define the scope of practice for a certified profession. Certification by the state is somewhat confusing to the public and the practitioners.

**Board response:** The Board appreciates the ambiguity of “mandatory certification” for athletic trainers, but the issue is relative to proposed regulations. Any revision in the level of regulation would necessitate a statutory change.

One person inquired about whether there should be a fee for provisional certification.

**Board response:** There is no separate fee for provisional certification. Athletic trainers may apply for certification by payment of the application fee and submission of required documentation. If they have met all requirements with the exception of passing the national examination, they may be issued a provisional certification. After the trainer has successfully completed the national examination, a certificate from the Board of Medicine will be issued without an additional fee.

## Detail of Changes

*Please detail any changes, other than strictly editorial changes, that are being proposed. Please detail new substantive provisions, all substantive changes to existing sections, or both where appropriate. This statement should provide a section-by-section description - or crosswalk - of changes implemented by the proposed regulatory action. Include citations to the specific sections of an existing regulation being amended and explain the consequences of the changes.*

All sections of these regulations are new; the provisions are as follows:

### **18 VAC 85-120-10. Definitions.**

Definitions as necessary for clarity and compliance are provided.

### **18 VAC 85-120-20. Public participation.**

Reference is given to board regulations for public participation in the regulatory process which apply to all professions regulated by the Board of Medicine.

### **18 VAC 85-120-30. Current name and address.**

A provision is established requiring each certificate holder to keep the board informed of current name and address.

### **18 VAC 85-120-40. General requirements.**

This section explicitly prohibits practice as an athletic trainer without certification from the board except as provided in § 54.1-2957.6 of the Code of Virginia.

### **18 VAC 85-120-50. Application.**

Provisions of the regulation set forth the requirements for applying for certification.

**18 VAC 85-120-60. Educational requirements.**

The education requirements for an applicant for certification include graduation from an accredited program or completion of an internship that qualifies a person to be credentialed as a Certified Athletic Trainer from the national certifying body.

**18 VAC 85-120-70. Examination requirements.**

An applicant for certification must submit evidence of passage of the national entry level examination for athletic trainers.

**18 VAC 85-120-80. Provisional certification.**

Provisions are set forth for a graduate of an educational program to be granted provisional certification while waiting the results of the certifying examination. Provisional certification ends upon receipt of the examination results or after one year, whichever comes first.

**18 VAC 85-120-90. Renewal of certificate.**

Requirements for a biennial renewal are listed to include payment of a renewal fee and attestation of current certification by NATABOC, the national credentialing body in athletic training.

**18 VAC 85-120-100. Reinstatement.**

Requirements for reinstatement of a certificate that has been lapsed from more than two years or has been revoked by the board are established in this section.

**18 VAC 85-120-110. Individual responsibilities.**

The responsibilities of an individual athletic trainer for his patient are set forth in this section.

**18 VAC 85-120-120. General responsibilities.**

This section sets out the responsibility of a certified athletic trainer for the actions of persons under his supervision and direction to include assurance that they do not perform functions that require professional judgement or discretion in the practice of athletic training.

**18 VAC 85-120-130. Supervisory responsibilities.**

Subsection A of this section establishes the responsibilities and requirements for an athletic trainer in the supervision of a person with provisional certification. Subsection B establishes the responsibilities and requirements for an athletic trainer in the supervision of a student athletic trainer.

**18 VAC 85-120-140. Violations.**

This section provides that violations of Chapter 29 of Title 54.1 of the Code of Virginia may subject a certificate holder to sanctions as determined by the board.

**18 VAC 85-120-150. Fees.**

This section sets forth the fees necessary for regulation of this profession to include an application fee, biennial renewal fee, reinstatement fee and miscellaneous fees.

### Family Impact Statement

*Please provide an analysis of the regulatory action that assesses the impact on the institution of the family and family stability including the extent to which the regulatory action will: 1) strengthen or erode the authority and rights of parents in the education, nurturing, and supervision of their children; 2) encourage or discourage economic self-sufficiency, self-pride, and the assumption of responsibility for oneself, one's spouse, and one's children and/or elderly parents; 3) strengthen or erode the marital commitment; and 4) increase or decrease disposable family income.*

The agency has reviewed the proposed regulation in relation to its impact on the institution of the family and family stability. There would be no effect of the proposal on the authority and rights of parents, economic self-sufficiency or the marital commitment. Since new regulations will require persons to pay a fee in order to obtain a certificate to practice, there will be some effect on disposable family income.